



Evington Echo

EvingtonEcho.uk

Keeping you up to date with Evington's news

The newspaper of Friends of Evington Charity No. 1205219

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Routes to Evington



Share your stories of how you came to Evington

More information in the Editorial on page 2.

Designed by Jason Chauhan

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Editorial



The aerial photograph on the front cover of this edition was given to the Evington Echo archives from the family of the late Michael Dally. Please let me know if you can pinpoint the year it was taken.

In order to record stories of your routes and how you came to be living in Evington, please contact me for a meet up, or come along to the Eden Café Bar, 11 Main Street, LE5 6DN Evington on a Saturday between 10.00am and 11.00am. Help build a picture of Evington! The intention is to work to build up a picture of Evington and also to work with Dr. Rob Watson, trustee of Friends of Evington and Director for Decentered Media, to build up an archive of stories about belonging or arriving in Leicester.

For more information about Dr. Rob

Watson and his partners, projects and campaigns go to decenteredmedia.co.uk or phone Helen Pettman to find out more.

The theme 'Routes' was chosen because it is the theme the National Trust organisers have chosen for the Heritage Open Days 2024 that will happen all over Britain for a fortnight in September. People are encouraged to visit buildings or take part in special heritage activities. It's all free.

In Evington, Chris Hossack has led on this for many years. In September 2023, his tour started in St. Denys Church, visited Piggy's Hollow (a scheduled ancient monument), went through the village, stopping to view inside Evington Chapel and finally, once the rain had stopped, ended up with a tea party under the Mulberry Tree in Evington Park.

This third Saturday Heritage Fair is the ideal place to meet other groups and individuals who are developing their own heritage projects. Either come along to find out and enjoy a good event with café facilities, and/or learn more about developing your own heritage project.

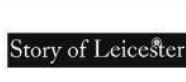
The Evington Echo will have a stand for recording both stories of belonging and arriving in Leicester and Routes to Evington.

Helen Pettman

Tel: 2204525 (has an answerphone) or 07910431044.

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SHEILA KENT'S 100TH BIRTHDAY



Photographer --Bob Esterbrook

On the 15th November this year, former Evington resident Sheila Kent celebrated her one hundredth birthday at Devonshire Court Care Home in Oadby.

The cake was made by Leicester's own Great British Bake Off 2023 finalist, Josh Smalley.

Sheila's association with Evington goes

back to 1939 when, with her parents and younger brother, the family came to live in Evington on Spencefield Lane. Apart from four years during the war from 1942 to 1946 when she was in the WRNS, (Women's Royal Naval Service) and a few years while she was training as a radiographer and employed elsewhere, she has lived in and around Evington since the 1950's.

She worked at Leicester Royal Infirmary as a radiographer for a number of years before retiring as Superintendent Radiographer at Leicester General Hospital in 1983.

Sheila was active in both the Soroptimist International and Business and Professional Women's Leicester Associations and served as president of both organisations.

Until recently she was able to worship at St Denys and was active in the local community, especially with the village hall, becoming a trustee in 2004.

She was joined at the party by friends and family, the Vicar of St Denys, and a number of Evington residents.

Simon Kent (Nephew)

NEW TREASURER REQUIRED

The Evington Village Fete and Show require a new treasurer. Contact Chris Hossack on 2415153 or email chris_hossack@yahoo.co.uk.

LEICESTER'S MARVELLOUS MEDICINE TALKS

These talks are free online programmes of health talks for the public hosted by a different medical expert each month. leicester.shospitals.nhs.uk/members/marvellous-medicine.

LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

The taxi age policy

To take part in this consultation visit <https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/> On this website you will see the City Council's overview of the situation and you can fill in an on-line survey. The consultation closes on 25th February.

DISTRIBUTORS FOR THE EVINGTON ECHO WANTED

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(2) Skampton Road and Skampton Green (60 copies)

The Evington Echo magazine is distributed 6-times a year and is volunteer run. If you join the distribution team you will receive the copies for a round and you distribute in your own time and contact a person on the distribution team (see page 2) if you have a problem.

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LETTERS

Dear readers,



Support workers at Ash Field Academy win above inflation pay rise after 43 days of strikes!

After more than 40 days of industrial action, we the education support workers at Ash Field Academy have emerged victorious in our fight for fair pay.

The dispute began after we discovered evidence that our employer, Ash Field Academy Trust, had been paying many of us significantly less than equivalent staff in other special needs schools. After around 6 months of negotiations, our employer was still proposing to pay us less than other settings. We were therefore forced to undertake an industrial action ballot, which we won with a crushing majority. The dispute ended up going on for so long that we needed to conduct a second industrial action ballot in September, which again returned an extremely decisive vote for strikes on an increased turnout.

Now, after 43 days of strikes, we have won the dispute. UNISON members have voted overwhelmingly to accept a new, significantly improved pay deal, which will be backdated to September 2022. The settlement includes the introduction of new pay scales and pay progression, which – alongside the nationally-agreed 2022/23 salary increase of £1,925 pro-rata – brings support staff pay into line with Local

Authority-maintained SEND schools. In addition, staff have secured a one-off payment of £2,000 to all support staff, and a contractual agreement to comply with all future nationally-agreed pay awards for school support staff.

We estimate that, excluding the £2,000 one off payment, the deal increases pay for classroom-based support staff (the lowest-paid employees involved in the dispute, who were most affected by the initial pay gap) by between 18 and 25 per cent.

This is a massive victory for all support staff at the school and the wider workers' movement. But like all investment in public services, it is not just the workers who will reap the benefits. Our actions will help to rectify the recruitment and retention issues our school has faced and ultimately benefit us, our students and their families.

Quotes from members:

UNISON member and Teaching Assistant, Prabha Ramakrishnan, who is also a

parent of a child who attends the school, said:

"This victory was achieved only due to the majority of the support staff fighting together for their rights to fair pay supported by parents and pupils." Another UNISON member who wished to remain anonymous, said:

"This is a win not just for our members but the support staff across the board. Workers showed tremendous resolve and professionalism amidst prejudicial pressures to return to work but we stood firm."

A further Ash Field worker who also wished to remain anonymous said:

"We won this dispute by sticking together, supporting each other and standing up for what we knew was right."

Tom Barker, UNISON Steward at Ash Field Academy (writing in a personal capacity).

Meet Santa event - 23rd Dec



Many thanks to all the volunteers, the Cedars' management and parents and children for supporting Friends of Evington's invitation to meet Santa.

Thank you Santa for bringing your elves and providing subsidised gifts.

Robert Johns

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GREEN ROOF



In February 2019 Leicester City Council declared a climate emergency. Some of the initiatives since then might seem clearly expressed, like the electric hopper bus. But others, like planning decisions less so. Sometimes your own decisions are equally as important as and impactful, to our locality and for the wider ripples.

In 2011 I was looking to add space to my home. A shed seemed the most flexible sort of choice. However, the year before, the often boggy and wet garden had flooded, after a few days of heavy rain. I had also started to hear about the concept of heat spots. This is where little local islands are hotter than the rest of an area due to surfaces like roofs and tarmac emitting more heat than natural area.

By incorporating a living roof into my shed, water run off is slowed down and collected for plant watering. This helps manage the wet, cloggy, clay soil and lawn. As the base isn't concrete but crushed rubble there is also the option for some run off underneath. I've also

learned a lot, about design, building structures and plants with shallow roots that can withstand extremes of temperature.

Concerned about the build up of heat spots in the city in the summer months; I hope that by adding a living roof this will not add to that problem, but might actually encourage others to use a similar solution. In 2020 Permaculture magazine published an article I wrote on why and how the shed was built. I'm hoping this will inspire others to include living roofs.

Some of the benefits I've got from a living roof:

- Skills and knowledge
- Extra growing space
- Managing and collecting water
- Interesting view out of window
- More plants for insects and critters

Ursula Bilson

The full article was printed in 'Permaculture' Winter 2020.

CLIMATE READY LEICESTER WARM HOME SURVEYS

Leicester City Council's Warm Home Survey service is for homeowners and private tenants in Leicester and is entirely free for some households. If you don't qualify for a free survey, the charge is £100 for a home visit and report.

For more information visit our webpage: Climate Ready Leicester Warm Home Surveys to learn about Home Upgrade Grants (HUG) our partners and criteria.

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/energy-efficiency/home-upgrade-grant/>

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Library Plus gives access to Evington Library (and Knighton Library) outside normal hours. To take part you will need to register and attend an induction as only library members over 16 years of age, who have registered for Library Plus and have received an induction can take part. Accompanied children under 16 can attend.

To register go to Evington (or Knighton) library with your library card and proof of identity and attend a brief induction by library staff. For more information search 'Libraries in Leicester' or <https://www.leicester.gov.uk> then 'libraries'.

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JOHN RUSSELL (1936 -2023)



What a man; what a life.

Last August family and friends gathered in Desford Free Church to celebrate the life of John Russell. John had lived and worked in Evington for decades, before moving with his wife Shirley to Desford to live closer

to elder son, Carey. The diversity of the gathering spoke volumes about the man and his interests. Moving tributes came from younger son Philip, Reverend Martin Mitchell and Eric Waweru.

Family Tribute

Philip, the younger son, described his father's life as "a tale of faith and service". John showed unflinching kindness and empathy to his fellow human beings. He shared a zany sense of humour with Trevor, his brother, and Philip recounted a particularly funny anecdote. The brothers shared a secret language that placed the syllable 'eg' in front of every vowel. One day a cheeky young Johnny used this secret code to make fun of a man wearing a ridiculously tall stovepipe hat. Imagine John's face when the gentleman retorted: "I have not heard that language since I was a child."

Growing up under the spectre of World War Two impacted John's outlook profoundly. Despite knowing about the potential cruelty of humanity he responded to hatred with love and he showed empathy where he saw suffering. Whether it was wartime or peacetime his Christian faith informed his humanity. John's missionary work led to lifelong

fellowships and his sons Philip and Carey recalled their Evington household being a welcoming hub for people from around the world. The lives of the family were enriched and it was an exemplary pastoral experience for the Russell boys.

Church Tribute

After the founding of Central Baptist church in 1983, John became a valuable member of the ministry team and a captivating and accomplished preacher. The Reverend Mitchell recalls that, in collaboration with the Leicester Twinning Association, John established a partnership with Strasbourg Baptist church. There followed several years of memorable exchange visits including to the European Parliament, to Strasbourg and across the Rhine into Germany to visit vineyards. The Reverend concluded with these words: "What a man.... what a life."

Centre Project Tribute

Eric Waweru (Chief Executive of the Centre Project) first met John in 2002 and they started a welcome, support and befriending service for asylum seekers. John was a founding member and trustee of The Centre Project.

My Tribute

The Russells were my friends and neighbours in Evington and I considered John to be a mentor. We shared an interest in French language and culture and comparative religions. He wore his academic credentials lightly – despite holding a master's degree in theology.

I asked probing questions about faith but he was never phased, replying in simple relatable language. There was never any pressure to convert. Instead, he gently accompanied me as I drew closer to understanding his faith. John encouraged me to volunteer with The Centre Project

at a time when I was emotionally adrift. The anchor of service reorientated me to myself and to others. For John, selfless service was beneficial to those being served, but also therapeutic for those donating their time and efforts. At our last meeting, John was on fine form - chatty and animated with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes. It was remarkable as he had not long recovered from a bout of serious illness. For once, I let him do all the talking. Alas, that was our final meeting.

Contributors: Philip Russell, Rev. Martin Mitchell and Eric Warweru.

Harkesh Farma

THIS PESKY POTHOLE MADE THE NATIONAL NEWS!



Unfortunately, a large pothole on Gartree Road, near to the car park for Shady Lane Arboretum, caused damage to vehicles when drivers assumed it was just surface water on the road. The pothole was cordoned off and then repaired quickly, due to the prompt actions of Cllr. Zuffar Haq who reported it to Leicester City Council and has offered support to affected drivers whose cars were damaged.

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LOST BLANKET



On New Year Eve this pink and blue blanket was on the floor, not far from the Cordery Road park entrance. It was on a hedge for two days, but no one claimed it, so I've washed and dried it. It looks hand knitted and it's a large lovely blanket, so hoping I find the owner.
Name and address supplied.

Editorial note: Please contact Helen Pettman if it's your blanket. (Contact details on page 2.)

SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

NHS Leicestershire Partnership
(Leicspart.nhs.uk/mental-health)

The free 24 hour mental health helpline is 0808 800 3302 (Always call 999 if there is a physical threat to life).

This website lists many groups which you might like to join and you can search by postcode when you are online.

In my postcode LE5 it lists the following:
* Thurnby Lodge Youth and Community Centre LE5 2NG – Mental Health Café Fridays 10am-3pm
Tel: 292 4550.

* Highfields Mental Health Café – Jamila's Legacy CIC Tel: 253 1053.

* Wesley Hall Community Centre Food pantry. Seated exercise. Lunch club and more.
Tel: 262 6000.

* Adhar Mental Health Charity. Advocacy/Talking therapies. Tel: 220 0072.

* Somali Development Services CIC. Tel: 285 5888.

* Shama Women's Centre. Tel: 251 4747.

THE PLASTIC FREE MOVEMENT

<https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org>

We are looking to hold a weekend event in Leicester in 2025 with speakers, workshops, live music, food and drink. We require volunteers to make this happen. If you are interested in helping and want to build towards a future with a significant reduction in the consumption and manufacture of plastics, please find more information and fill in your details at <https://forms.gle/GINwYcBsSxyQESjM9>.

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c1965-1968 19/21 Main Street New Worthington's Stores

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19/21 Main Street J & A Pharmacy 2001 to present

From records kept by Michael Dally, April 2018.

Evington Post Office by chance avoided the problems, highlighted by the ITV programme 'Alan Bates versus the Post Office'. Unfortunately there isn't a post office now within any of the Downing Drive shops.

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CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CONCERT AND CELEBRATION OF 50 YEARS

This Christmas, Willows Music Group, run by Daphne Wilshere, gave their first concert since Covid. It was held in St Denys church and celebrated Daphne's five decades of teaching the piano to children.

The group, which has been based in Evington for nearly all of these 50 years, nearly closed down during Covid, as many children did not want to work online, so this seemed a good time to retire. However, the invasion of Ukraine showed the possibility that things could become more difficult, especially with increasing prices, so teaching restarted on a smaller scale and online.

Having started teaching in the Scraftoft area, Daphne moved to Evington in 1974. The group has varied in size reaching a maximum of around 70 children and over the years more than 600 children have been members.



On the organ at St. James the Greater 2009

The first concert was in 1977 for the Queen's Silver Jubilee, when children sang the musical 'Holy Moses!' at Evington village hall. Many concerts followed at numerous other venues, both at the local churches of St Philip's and St James the Greater, and in Hungarton, Scraftoft, Eyres Monsell, Fleckney and Humberstone.



Lian at the concert on the piano

Eyres Monsell, Fleckney and Humberstone.

As well as concerts, for many years the group ran an annual music festival, when Daphne's pupils all joined together for a morning of competing for cups, with a guest adjudicator judging the classes.

Former pupils, now at university, returned to listen and the concert also included a guest performance on cello. The theme of the concert was the decoration of a Christmas tree at a surprise party in a barn.

The group hope to give another concert in the summer, and Daphne would also be very pleased to hear from any children who might like to help restart a singing group. You can contact Daphne on willowmusicgroup2@gmail.com

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY, EVINGTON HOME, GROCOT ROAD

CHRISTMAS FAIR – EVINGTON HOME – 2nd December



This was a very successful occasion, managed by the Pilgrims' Friend Society and supported by local residents, the Care Home residents, staff and volunteers. The manager at this local home would like to hear from any readers of the Evington Echo, who would be interested in volunteering, by running an activity or joining in ongoing events. For more information contact andyharrison@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk. If you aren't on email, contact the Editor of this magazine.

ALEX PORTLOCK UPDATE



Readers may recall Alex Portlock, a Franco-British journalist who was born in Leicester and is now living and working in France. As part of a journalism course in Montpellier, Alex was required to complete an internship with a media outlet. The Trustees of the Friends of Evington authorised the Echo's first community media internship. Alex wrote many articles and assisted with an exhibition of the Evington Echo to celebrate our 300th edition in February 2023, at the Documentary Media Centre, organised by John Coster.

We were delighted that Alex selected the Evington Echo to gain work experience as a community journalist. During Alex's exams in Montpellier last October, the jury was impressed with the quality of the work placement. Alex got in touch recently to provide a career update:

"One year after this enriching experience, I am in a small picturesque town called Uzès, in Southern France. My role is to share the latest news, to provide essential insights, and details of events in a weekly newspaper called 'Le Republicain d'Uzès'.

"With three other journalists, I cover this town of 10,000 inhabitants as well as the surrounding villages. It is a rural area where many inhabitants and organizations get involved to create a vibrant social and cultural lifestyle, with a particular focus on sustainable projects.

"The area of Uzège (Uzès and surrounding villages) attracts many anglophones. In fact, during my reports, I had numerous occasions to speak English because a couple of my interviewees were British or American. For example, my first report was on a local associative station called Fuze. Though it is mostly in French, they do have an English section. I met Nicola Clouter, a lady from Reading, living in Uzès, who is very involved in Fuze. She presents the local agenda to English-speaking folk.

"I am also a volunteer at this radio station. In January 2024 I am launching a regular show called 'English corner in Uzège'. I write and lead radio bulletins for French locals interested in anything linked to Britain or the English language. My first one will be on language tips."



Alex Portlock seated on the far right, with colleagues from Le Republicain.

We wish Alex Portlock all the best in her multi-media career and we hope to keep in touch. Our first major experience of mentoring a media reporter has been a success and we look forward to developing further internships.

Harkesh Farma

STEADY STEPS – LET'S GET MOVING



These sessions are starting on Wednesday 17th January at Evington Village Hall (Church Road, Evington, Leicester LE5 6FA) from 10.15am to 11.15am.

It is a free 24-Week Programme. Pre-booking is required as spaces are limited. To book your place please contact Jenny Gaunt: j.gaunt@active-together.org or on 01509 467490.

Referrals from health care professionals as well as self-referrals are accepted. Participants range from those that have had a fall and want to prevent another and others that haven't had a fall and want to prevent one from happening in the first place. This programme will stop accepting referrals in the 6th week of the programme due to the progression of the course.

Once participants have completed the 24-week programme we want our participants to keep up the good work and continue being active and we are always looking for community exercise groups we can signpost participants to.

Jenny Gaunt

Editorial comment: Friends of Evington cover insurance and risk assessments for the following community run exercise groups, where the modest charges are to cover expenses only.

*Gentle exercises: Wednesdays, 10.30am to 11.30am at the Parish Centre. See the advert on page 14.



*Yoga sessions managed by Najma Sabat on behalf of Friends of Evington, and run by Manjula Odedra (Tel:07448732696) and held on Monday and Wednesday at Mayflower Methodist Church community rooms from 6.00pm to 7.00pm.

Also see page 15 of this issue for other exercise groups in Evington.

REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR JENNY JOANNOU (EVINGTON WARD COUNCILLOR) ABOUT HER WORK AS A COUNCILLOR



Since being elected it has been a whirlwind of new experiences. Learning the working of the council has been a steep uphill climb. We are placed on scrutiny panels - mine are Adult Social Care, The Crime Commissioner's and

The Standards Committee. The council meetings are a revelation and I would encourage Evington residents to go and sit in the public gallery and watch!

The very best part of my role is meeting people in the community and helping to solve their problems. To date there have been housing issues, flooding problems, parking problems. I have met with the police and I now have regular meetings with them. Feel free to contact me if you have a problem.

Jenny Joannou.
Evington Ward Councillor
Jenny.Joannou@leicester.gov.uk
Tel: 07742 766461
(Also see surgery times on page 14.)

Assistant Editor's note.
You can watch a range of council meetings on Leicester City Council's webcasting website.
Meetings are broadcast live, and then archived to view whenever you want.
www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/decisions-meetings-and-minutes/webcasts

REPORT FROM CLLR. ZUFFAR HAQ (EVINGTON WARD)



These are some of the tasks I have undertaken during the last few weeks:

Supported by my team, Nitesh Dave and Farida Patel, my Saturday surgery for residents continues to take place on

Saturdays at 11 o'clock at the Eden café in Evington.

After being approached by a resident from Gisbourne Court at my Saturday morning surgery in Evington, I liaised with the City Council in order to resolve some long-standing issues for the residents, which I'm told has greatly improved their quality of life. I am always available to help residents with problems and can assure confidentiality.

I have attended council meetings at the Town Hall and City Hall and surgeries for residents at the Evington Library and the Coleman Neighbourhood Centre. (see page 14). I attended three Remembrance Services including the service at the War Memorial in Evington Village.

By invitation, I attended a Warm Homes and Climate Action meeting to highlight why action on climate change and fuel poverty is so important to our communities.

I have supported a fundraiser for Water Aid and Cancer research.

By invitation, I attended Diwali celebrations at Wesley Hall Community Centre.

I contacted local primary schools to ensure that they were aware of the offer of free coding and tech. gadgets available to schools. The pocket-sized computers can help children take their first steps into coding and prepare for a digital future.

I attended the Adult Education Centre for the Evington Echo stand event.

I was interviewed for ITV News for a report about the current 'unsuitable for purpose' health checks for new born babies and the need to reform existing checks.

After being contacted by members of the community and town centre businesses, I met with members of the Council to discuss ways of improving car parking for the elderly and disabled who wish to shop in Leicester City Centre and to improve footfall for businesses.

I continue to liaise with and support local schools with any issues or requests they may have.

I have provided support for residents affected by flooding caused by Storm Henk.

I continue to work hard to support residents and communities in our area.

zuffar.haq@leicester.gov.uk
Mobile 07742 766454.

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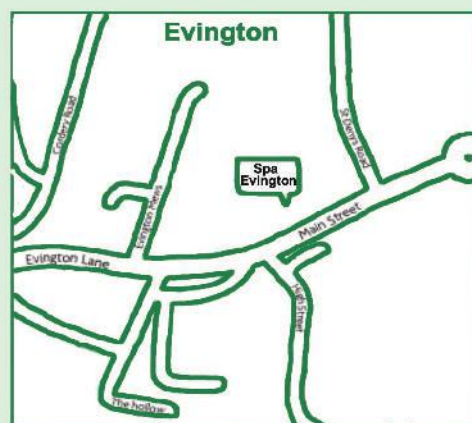
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EVINGTON HOUSE ESTATE



Written by M. Hewson, Parks Information Officer in July 1998

Evington House became a retirement home for Colonel John Dick Burnaby, (Colonel Burnaby), his wife and two unmarried daughters in 1836.

Colonel Burnaby was a younger son of the Burnaby family of Baggrave Hall at Hungarton in Leicestershire. The family came originally from Asfordby. Colonel Burnaby was born in 1776 at Greenwich in Kent where his father was the vicar. His father, the Revd. Andrew Burnaby, was noted for having travelled across Canada as a young man sending home reports on the 'British Territories'; a demanding journey in those days. Like many younger sons, Colonel Burnaby had to make his own way in the world and he joined the 1st Foot Guards, (later to become the Grenadiers) as an Ensign at the age of 16. The Army lists reveal his steady promotion until he reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel but I, (M. Hewson), have been unable to discover anything else about his

military career, despite having scanned the musters of camps in the Peninsular War, in which the regiment fought. He was rumoured to have been at the Battle of Waterloo, but a list of all the officers present at the battle, published in 1919, has no mention of him. In 1789, Colonel Burnaby married Miss Henry Anne Fowke of Lowesby Hall, Leics. and they had 11 children. Their eldest son, another John, was well known as a Recorder (judge) in the Leicester area.

Colonel Burnaby died in 1852 and after the death of his wife, his daughters Miss Ann and Miss Henry installed the large memorial window in the chancel of St. Denys Church with two small windows commemorating their own lives. Miss Henry and Miss Ann lived on until the 1880s taking an interest in the life of the village and donating a harmonium to the village school. Every Summer they would entertain the school children to a 'tea drinking' in the grounds of Evington House. In 1997, a dog's gravestone was discovered in the park. Unfortunately, the top is chipped but the memorial poem is carefully composed and refers to the owner as 'she' so it may well have been in memory of a Burnaby pet. An interesting fact is that Colonel Burnaby's brother is an ancestor of Queen Elizabeth II. In 1859 his granddaughter, Caroline married the Revd. C. Cavendish Bentinck and their daughter Celia, later the Countess of Strathmore, was the mother of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Evington House was then

owned or let for short periods by a succession of families. In the 1914-18 War it was used as an auxiliary hospital (Voluntary Aided Detachment Hospital) and the small room above the porch was possibly an operating theatre. In 1931, it was bought by Mr. Tom Trevor Sawday, an architect and the son-in-law of Arthur Wakerley, who developed much of North Evington, naming the streets after his wife and daughters, Dorothy, Constance and Margaret. At that time Evington was truly a separate village with a genuinely rural way of life. Leicester ended where Mayflower Church now stands. In 1989, Mr. Hugh Sawday, Tom Trevor Sawday's son, loaned the photographs which have been displayed in the entrance hall and show the house, grounds and village in the 1930s.

During the Second World War, Evington House was the headquarters of the Home Guard Platoon with Mr. Sawday as second-in-command. In 1947, the house and estate of nearly 40 acres were bought by Leicester Corporation for £17,000. It was formally opened as a public park by Councillor Hill in 1948.

Unfortunately, much of the character of Evington House, used as offices and a training centre, has not been preserved, but the grouping of the trees, some planted in pairs, and the secluded setting, give the feel of a private estate. There is a fine mulberry tree in the garden for the disabled at the back of the house.

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RICHARD ERNEST GAYS (DICK GAYS) 23RD MAY 1935 – AUGUST 2013

An obituary to Dick was written by Brian Golland, who was his best friend and a senior police officer and a Group Scout leader of the 19th Leicester (Evington) Scout Group.

Dick was born in Evington and went to the local village school with Michael Dally. Michael saved this obituary to a remarkable Evington born and bred engineer.

Although he was very clever and could have achieved an academic life, practical work was what Dick preferred and after leaving school he became an engineering apprentice where he learned the skills that would stay with him all his life.

He became a member of the Leicester and Midland canoe clubs and was a founder of the Leicestershire Association of Canoeists. In those days, canoes were either made of wood or wood and canvas and Dick was more than capable of building his own canoe. His method of manufacture was called 'Dickwood'. He not only built canoes, but collapsible ones that could be taken on a train. He met his wife Margaret through a canoeing friend. She wasn't too impressed with Dick's trick of holding his breath and hanging upside down below his canoe until everyone was fearful that he was drowning. "Showing off" she said, but nevertheless the relationship blossomed and they married and had two children, Ian and Mary.

Dick did National Service with the RAF as an aircraft engineer and spent most of his national service canoeing. He turned his hand to making fibre glass canoes and designed and made the 'Swift' canoes and commissioned Soar Valley Product to make them under licence.

After National Service, Dick joined the police force and met Brian.

Dick was more than capable of reaching a high rank. However he had no interest in progressing. He was more interested in his love of the outdoors, but now no longer just canoes. He met someone who parachuted. To further this new hobby, Dick sold the right to his canoes for the



price he needed to buy his first parachute. He started to make rip cords and handles that were better and cheaper than anyone else's. In fact the parachute manufacturer bought them from him. He became a parachute instructor. And you guessed it, he made his own parachute and jumped in it. Apart from one other parachute manufacturer called Irvine, Dick was the only person in this country to have ever made and jumped from his own parachute. He started to make para-



shapes. (See pictures above).



During this time, Dick and Brian parachuted and walked together and with the walking they gradually developed a more fixed team and walked everywhere – Derbyshire (mainly) but Wales, Ireland, the Lake District, North York Moors, the Outer Hebrides and the Scilly Isles. Dick prepared the routes, he must have done hundreds and everything was planned to the last detail.

Then Dick found out about REMAP, a charitable organisation of scientists and engineers who make equipment, gadgets and aids to improve the life of disabled people, enabling them to live more independent lives. Dick loved designing and making equipment in his workshop and made 82 different gadgets. Towards the end of his life his two main interests were walking and REMAP. Dick did a lot of work to get REMAP better known. He is sadly missed by them. He was many people's hero.

The late Brian Golland wrote this article in 2013.

Editorial comment:

If you like making things and want to follow in Dick's footsteps, you can contact Leicestershire and Rutland REMAP by email: info@remapleics.org.uk or call 236 5520. (www.RemapLeics.org.uk)

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Meet your Evington ward councillors

Cllr. Zuffar Haq, Cllr. Jenny Joannou and Cllr. Deepak Bajaj. 1st Tuesday in the month at Evington Library from 4.00pm to 5.30pm and 3rd Wednesday in every month from 10.30am to 12 noon at the Coleman Centre LE5 4LR.

Meet your North Evington ward councillors

Cllr. Dilip Joshi, Cllr. Sanjay Modhwadia, Cllr. Ravi Mahesh. St. Barnabas Library, 2 French Road LE5 4AH. First and Second Saturdays of each month 2.30pm - 3.30pm

Meet your Stoneygate councillors

Cllrs. Raffiq Mohammed, Cllr. Manjula Sood and Cllr. Yasmin Surti St. Philips Church Hall, LE2 1HN. 2nd Tuesday in the month. Evington Muslim Centre 5-7 Evington Drive, LE5 5PF - Third Sat. of the month 12.00noon - 1.00pm. Virtual Teams Surgery by appointment with Cllr. Raffiq Mohammed 07742766430. - First Monday of each month 5.30pm - 6.30pm.

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St. Denys Parish Centre
Church Road, Evington LE5 6FA
10.30am - 11.30am
11th Jan onwards
£2 per session to cover venue hire
Afterwards you are invited to join us for a chat (venue to be confirmed)

MAY DAY SALE

Book your table for £12 at this year's May Day Sale, Evington Village Hall on Bank Holiday Monday 6th May. Open for customers from 10.00am until 3.00pm.

We are looking for stallholders to sell a range of art, crafts, gifts and homemade produce.

It is a fundraising event for the local Grow Together charity supporting community gardening in and around Evington.

For more details and booking forms please contact: diane@growtogether.org.uk

EVINGTON YOUTH CLUB (EYC)

Email: info@evingtonyouthclub.com

Basketball. Sat. 10.30am -12.30pm. £2 contribution per child.
Chess Club. Every Sat. 10.30am-12.30pm. £2 contribution per child.
Football. Every Friday 7.30pm - 8.30pm. Free to participate.
Table Tennis. Every Sat. 10.30am-12.30pm £2 contribution per child.

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during term time
In the Parish Centre
attached to
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Parking available opposite the church

ST. DENYS CHURCH LE5 6FA

Monday Meets.

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month except January from 2.00pm to 4.00pm in Evington Parish Centre, attached to St. Denys Church. LE5 6FA.

Musical Toddler Group meet during term time only on Fridays from 10.00am to 11.00am at the Parish Centre. All preschool children welcome. Led by Sarah Gregory (Community worker) More information at stdenysyouth@gmail.com

Youth Club. Alternative Friday evenings from 7.00pm to 8.30pm at the Parish Centre. Play pool, table football or challenge your friends on the Wii.
Contact: stdenysyouth@gmail.com

Every 4th Sunday each month, 3.00pm Crafty Church aimed at young families and the young at heart!

Every third Tuesday monthly, 10.00am, Coffee, Cake and Fellowship (Parish Centre).

Weekly on Tuesdays, 7.30pm, Cruse Bereavement Group meets in the Parish Centre.

Weekly on Wednesdays, 10.00am, Evington Family History Group meets in the Parish Centre.

Weekly on Thursdays, 10.30am, Gentle Exercise Group meets in the Parish Centre.

Easter Services

Sunday 24th March, 10.00am, Palm Sunday Holy Communion with Passion play.

Monday 25th March, 6.00pm, Compline.

Tuesday 26th March, 7.30pm, Choir/Organ performance of choral work 'Passiontide' by local composer.

Wednesday 27th March. 6.00pm, Compline Maundy Thursday, 10.00am, Holy Communion.

Good Friday, 2.00pm, The Last Hour.

Easter Day, Sunday 31st March, service at dawn.

Easter Day, 10.00am, Holy Communion

For more details contact: office@stdenys.org.uk.

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19th Leicester (Evington) Scout Group

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Phone - 2209017.
Email - info@evingtonscouts.org.uk
Facebook - search for Evington Scouts and send us a private message.

24th Leicester (St Philip's) Air Scout Group

We welcome new members, both boys and girls, to our group of Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. We meet on Monday evenings at St. Philip's Church Hall. For more information, please contact: 2760457.
Email: chrisandpeterhardy@btinternet.com

Evington Garden Club

Having finished 2023 with 8 visitors to our very successful Christmas meeting we look forward to welcoming more visitors in 2024.

On Tuesday 16th January (2.30 pm) Jeff Bates sets us off to a good start with his advice on how to manage 'CUT FLOWERS'.

Angela Holland (nursery owner) will be back to tell us how she manages to run her Nursery and will have some plants for sale at our 20th February meeting (also 2.30 pm).

On 19th March (again 2.30 pm), to brighten up Lent, we have Karen Gimson to bring us all up to speed re FABULOUS CONTAINERS

As always ALL VISITORS are most welcome
Patrick O Callaghan Tel. 2215513.

Gentle Exercise Sessions at St. Denys

Church's Parish Centre Thursdays between 10.30am and 11.30am. Cost £2. Visitors welcome. Contact Mary on 07952 775449 or just pop in to see if this group is for you. See advert on page 14.

Women's Institute in Evington Village

Humberstone Heights and Belgrave Women's Institute hold their meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Evington Village Hall. Everyone is welcome with a view to joining. A very friendly welcome awaits you. For more information contact Barbara Garlick on 07713804407.

Rummikub Club

Monday morning at The Cedars in Evington at 11.00am and we play the game Rummikub.

Rummikub is a tile based game with elements of the card game rummy and mahjong which can be played by 2-4 players.
Cost £1.50.
For further information please contact Lesly Biro on 2419096.

Evington Social Club

Every Wednesday from 11.00am to 1.00pm at The Cedars, Main Street, Evington. £1.50 with tea, coffee, biscuits provided.
Tel: Renuka on 07514 202579.

Tai Chi with Nassar Butt

Fridays 9.00 -11.30am.
Evington Village Hall. For further information, contact Nassar on 077 9224 2150.

About the Village Hall

evington.wixsite.com/villagehall
Contact Jean Matthews 07445590599.

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Wednesday 6.00 - 7.00pm with Manjula (Ladies only). For more information tel: Manjula on 07448 732696.
manjula.odedra.yoga@gmail.com

Nordic Walking

Walking using these long poles is a great way to improve your mental and physical wellbeing. Contact: ministryofnordicwalks@gmail.com or phone Penny on 0750 2 57 6764.

Bhangra Classes

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Saturdays: at Hamilton Community College for adults.

Tel: Preet on 07525153284 for more information.

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www.goodwoodevangelicalchurch.org.uk

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Vanessa on 07765 407323.

nelliebeeswans@gmail.com or

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Evington Local History and Heritage Group

Wednesday 14th February 2.30pm - 4.00pm.
Peppermint Billy, William Brown and the Tollgate murders of 1856. Speaker Joanne Mungovin.

Wednesday 13th March 2.30 - 4.00pm
Beaumanor's Station. The Secrets of the World War II Listening Service.
Speaker Mark Temple.

At St. Denys Church Parish Centre LE5 6FA.
Free parking. Membership £20 a year for 10 meetings, £3 for visitors per session.
For more information contact John and Pauline Sloan. Tel: 2412210. email: jandpsloan@gmail.com

Visitors welcome.

2024 Heritage Fairs

Adult Education Centre,
Belvoir Street LE1 6QL

10th February 2024 from 10.00am to 3.00pm.

11th May 2024 from 10.00am to 3.30pm.

For more information see advert and Editorial on page 2.

Leicester Secular Society

www.secularsociety.org.uk

Meeting are at the Secular Hall at 6.30pm every Sunday, 75 Humberstone Gate LE2 1WB.

4th Feb. The Resurgence of Traditional Storytelling. (Ancient Art - Modern revival.)

11th Feb. Phages (Darwin lecture).

18th Feb. Dying without God.

25th Feb. The Rupert Street Revolt and the Poor Law in Leicester.

3rd March Secularism is a feminist issue.

10th March Concert in memory of Michael Gerard.

17th March Ride on Sistas (Cycling group).

24th March ThePlant Atlas 2020.

Evington Family History Group

Meetings are at St. Denys Parish Centre, Church Road, Evington, Leicester, LE5 6FA every Wednesday 10.00am to 12.00 noon. Car parking is available in the Church Car Park opposite the Church. Beginners welcome. For more details contact Judith Walmsley on 2764409.

My Word Poetry Group

This friendly group meet on Tuesdays at Blends Cafe Downing Drive 4.00pm to 5.30pm. Tel: 0780 449 5527 for more information. All welcome.

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